

PETER WELCH
AT-LARGE, VERMONT

CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4500

2187 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4500
202-225-4115

DISTRICT:
128 LAKESIDE AVENUE
SUITE 235
BURLINGTON, VT 05401
(802) 652-2450
(888) 605-7270

April 28, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

Please see the following information about a project to be considered for the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2023. The following project has community support and will be an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars.

Project Applicant: City of Newport

Project Name: Restore the Gardner Park Grandstand & Ballfield

Project Location: 155 Gardner Park Road, Newport, VT

Project County: Orleans

Requested Amount: \$500,000

Account: HUD/EDI

Project Explanation: Rehabilitation of the Gardner Park Grandstand and upgrade of the Gardner Park baseball field to better serve the community of Newport, VT.

The Gardner Park Grandstand has a long history from its initial construction through the VERA program in 1934 where forty of the city's unemployed men were able to be put back to work during the depression. Construction of the historical Gardner Park Grandstand was announced by Mayor Winston Prouty in May of 1939.

The grandstand has been a fixture in Gardner Park for over 80 years and is one of only a few original wooden structures left in the State of Vermont. The structure needs repairs and major updates to make it fully usable by the public again and ADA accessible. The goal of this project is to restore the grandstand and upgrade the field directly in front of the grandstand to make it a multi-purpose field. This will allow the preservation of the historic building, update the structure to modern standards and increase economic activity for the park.

The Northeast Kingdom is one of the most economically depressed areas in Vermont, with many living below the poverty line. This area also has a high rate of obesity, which contributes to unhealthy medical outcomes. The project will expand the capacity for community members to access and use the Gardner Park Athletic Facility, as well as allow for the historic grandstand to again become the hub of the community it once was.

The project preserves history for future generations by upgrading the structure to comply with current ADA code and preserving one of the last all wooden Grandstands from a bygone era. The project also upgrades the field to a multi-use field that will allow all ages and genders to enjoy its use. Upgrading to a multi-use field also allows for increased state and regional softball/baseball tournaments, as well as musical concerts to be conducted in the park, tying into Newport's outdoor recreational economy, and bringing in new dollars to the local economy.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Welch", with a large, stylized initial "P".

Peter Welch
Member of Congress